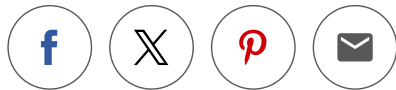


Palouse Falls State Park: The Complete Guide

By [Kristin Kendle](#) | Updated on May 18, 2021

✔ Fact checked by [Erin Medicott](#)



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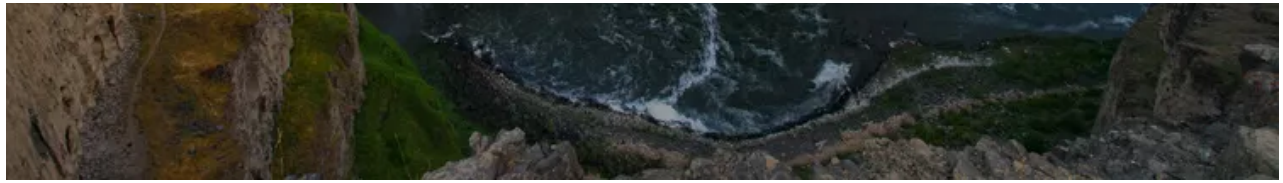


PHOTO: LORENZO MAROTTI CAMPI / GETTY IMAGES

ADDRESS:

Palouse Falls Rd, LaCrosse, WA 99143, USA

[Get directions](#)

PHONE: +1 509-646-9218

[Visit website](#)

Palouse Falls State Park, home of its namesake waterfall, is located in Washtucna, Washington, which is not exactly the most well-known place in the state. It's about halfway between Spokane and Kennewick in Eastern Washington and it's pretty remote—the state park doesn't have cell service and it's not located near any popular or busy roads in the area. Even though it's pretty tucked away, making the trek reveals a beautiful scene, highlighted by a pretty amazing waterfall.

Things to Do

Palouse Falls State Park is not filled with things to do, and it tops out at right around 100 acres, so it's not huge. It's remote and does not have a lot of facilities. There are no phones and sometimes there is no staff on site. But the purpose of visiting this park is to enjoy sheer natural beauty at its finest.

First and foremost, you'll see Palouse Falls. The Palouse River travels through a narrow cataract and falls 200 feet over a cliff into a stunningly beautiful circular pool surrounded by canyon walls. The scene looks like something straight out of a fantasy movie. The falls are the only ones left from an ancient Ice Age flood path, too, making them even more unique.

You can enjoy them from a small overlook near the parking lot or take a short hike for another perspective.

Photographers, painters, and other artists enjoy Palouse Falls for its beauty. Park yourself on the trails above the falls and let your creativity fly. There are a few viewpoints to enjoy the falls from, but make sure you stay on official trails. History buffs can read informative plaques around the park about the Ice Age floods and how they formed this dramatic landscape.

If you have your own kayak, you can travel down the Palouse River for about 7 scenic miles until it hits the Snake River. Just make sure you begin your journey downriver of the falls. Bring along a picnic and kick back and enjoy the surroundings. The park has a few picnic tables where you can set up for lunch. Bird watchers and wildlife viewing are possible here, too.

Best Hikes & Trails

There's only one hiking trail in the park that goes from the parking lot to the waterfall and while you might be tempted to hike off-trail in the park, don't do it. The ground is prone to rockslides and a fall into the water is potentially deadly. The trail is steep and when the rocks are wet can be slippery, so take it slowly and wear shoes with a good grip.

If the weather is nice, bring a swimsuit and a picnic to enjoy. The trail ends at the water and you can go for a swim to cool down after your trek. People often think of rainy and cool Seattle when they think of [Washington weather](#), but the eastern part of the state gets hot in the summer and a dip will be welcome.

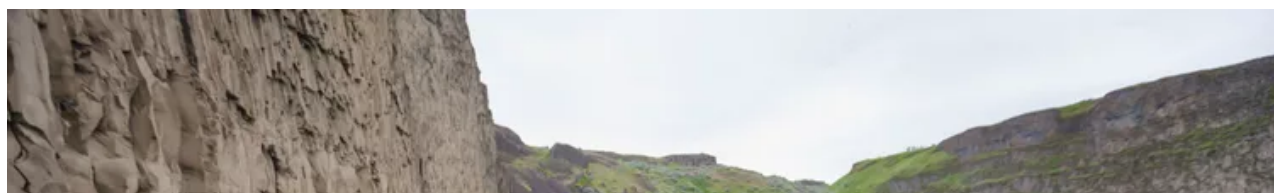




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Where to Camp

Palouse Falls State Park has a tent-only campground with eleven campsites and a pit toilet. Campsites are primitive and only one is ADA accessible. Each site can have two tents and four people and each has a picnic table and a fire pit. Drinking water is available from April to October only. Sites cannot be reserved in advance and are only available on a first-come, first-served basis.

For RV camping, you can find RV campgrounds in nearby towns like Washtucna and LaCrosse.

Where to Stay Nearby

For accommodations that don't require an RV or a tent, you'll mostly need to look to the nearest cities. [Walla Walla](#) is about an hour south of Palouse Falls and the college town of Pullman is about an hour to the east. The biggest city in the area—and Eastern Washington—is [Spokane](#), which is about two hours north of the state park.

Palouse Falls Inn: The closest place to stay is run by a local couple who turned their home into a bed and breakfast simply because they love their town and want to share it with visitors. It's charmingly homey and the quintessential small-town accommodation for your visit to the park.

The Finch: One of Walla Walla's trendiest hotels, this chic spot shows off the best of the local community. Walla Walla is a destination known for outdoor recreation, its foodie scene, and local wineries, so there's plenty to keep busy here.

Historic Davenport Hotel: What may be the grandest place to sleep in the entire state, stepping into this historic hotel is like stepping into the Ritz. The building is an iconic part of Spokane and visitors who want to experience luxury on their vacation are sure to find it here.

How to Get There

While Palouse Falls is a worthwhile journey, it's definitely a journey. It's not close to much and the roads leading into the park can be rough. It's not a bad idea to check the [road conditions](#) before you go.

If you're driving across Washington on Interstate 90, which [connects Seattle to Spokane](#), Palouse Falls State Park is about an hour detour off the highway. Wherever you're coming from, you'll have to get onto WA-261. From there, follow signs for Palouse Falls State Park. The road winds through some hills for about 8.5 miles before you turn onto Palouse Falls Road. The road is well marked with a sign that says Palouse Falls State Park. From here, the road is dirt and gravel and can be pretty rough for a couple of miles until you reach the parking lot.





PHOTO: DIANA ROBINSON PHOTOGRAPHY / GETTY IMAGES

Accessibility

The short pathway to the overlook with scenic views of the waterfall meets ADA standards and is fully accessible. There are also nearby picnic areas and a bathroom at the park that are accessible. At the state park campground, there is one accessible campsite so reach out to the park rangers if you're interested in reserving it.

Tips for Your Visit

You will need a state [Discover Pass](#) to visit the park. If you don't have one already, you can buy one at the park with cash or a check (credit cards are not accepted).

There are a dozen [free days throughout the year](#) where admission is waived into Palouse Falls State Park as well as the rest of Washington's state parks, such as New Year's Day, National Get Outdoors Day, and

Veterans Day.

There are a few barbeque pits available at the park on a first-come, first-served basis outside of the campgrounds, for those who want to enjoy a picnic day at the park without sleeping there.

If the area around Palouse Falls gets crowded with visitors, head just 7 miles downriver to Lyons Ferry State Park for more scenery and swimming options.